

Section 2

LAND USE ELEMENT

2.1 Land Use Vision

In 2030, Bloomington envisions itself as a city with:

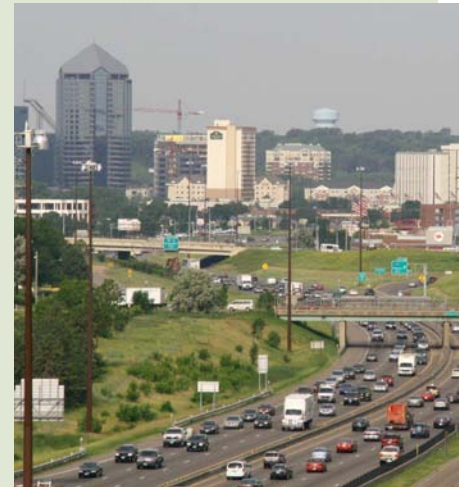
- Stable, well-maintained residential neighborhoods;
- Preserved natural areas and renewed parks;
- Desirable, renewed, convenient, neighborhood-oriented commercial areas;
- Thriving, diversified employment centers near freeways and transitways;
- Improved mobility for transit users, cyclists, pedestrians and motorists; and
- A mixture of high density residential and commercial uses at key nodes.

Despite being fully developed, Bloomington will continue to grow as businesses and residents take advantage of the city's excellent location near an international airport, several freeways, transit, major employment centers, numerous services and excellent amenities. Future growth will be a product of redevelopment and is anticipated to occur primarily within the I-494 corridor. Almost all residential growth (forecast at an average of 164 households per year through 2030) will be multi-family. Most non-residential growth (forecast at an average of over 1,707 new jobs per year through 2030) will be in office, retail, service and hotel uses.

Sustainable Development and Community Enhancement Strategy

Bloomington's sustainable development and community enhancement strategy operates within the context of the Metropolitan Council's regional development strategy, which seeks to maximize efficient use of public investments by strongly encouraging infill development and redevelopment within and along the I-494 beltway. Bloomington supports this regional development strategy and seeks to implement it by using the City's official controls to encourage most new commercial development to occur in a linear fashion along the I-494 corridor. Encouraging renewal in this linear corridor:

- Brings additional employment opportunities, services and amenities to Bloomington residents;
- Enhances the City's tax base;
- Attracts improved transit service; and
- Buffers Bloomington neighborhoods from many of the negative impacts of growth.



Normandale Lake District lies on the west side of Bloomington abutting Interstate 494.

Land Use Planning Intent

- Promote continued economic development for the City and the region.
- Guide growth in a manner that minimizes the need for motorized travel.
- Capitalize on regional infrastructure improvements.
- Maintain and enhance economic vitality.
- Encourage the redevelopment of outdated or incompatible land uses.
- Mitigate existing land use conflicts and avoid future land use conflicts.
- Preserve and enhance sensitive environmental areas.
- Meet the needs of residents for convenient services and amenities in an ever evolving market place.
- Adjust to an aging population.



Historic Guiding Principles

The City of Bloomington has a long history of land use planning at both the citywide and district levels. These plans have successfully influenced land use in Bloomington and have shared the following guiding principles:

- Take advantage of the proximity of freeways by locating high-value commercial and service uses along freeways and at interchanges.
- Locate housing farther away from the freeways than commercial land uses to reduce both land use conflicts and commercial traffic through residential areas.
- Preserve and enhance natural drainage systems for their flood mitigating ability, their habitat, and environmental benefits.
- Preserve and enhance open space and conservation areas as an amenity and community hallmark.
- Work toward a 50/50 balance of residential and non-residential property tax base.

To implement its land use vision and guide future growth, Bloomington will pursue the development strategy outlined in **Table 2.1, below.**

Table 2.1

Sustainable Development and Community Enhancement Strategy

Residential Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preserve and enhance the character of low density neighborhoods. • Encourage medium density infill housing to locate near transit. • Encourage the highest density housing to locate in selected nodes near services, amenities, employment, and transit. <i>(See Housing Element Figure 3.7, page 3.8.)</i>
Public Parks, Open Space and Conservation Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preserve and enhance natural areas. • Renew parks. • Expand trail system.
Neighborhood and Community Commercial Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage market appropriate redevelopment that improves function, aesthetics, walkability and bikability. • Encourage additional residential uses within and adjacent to commercial areas.
Industrial Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the continued viability of Bloomington's industrial areas as part of a diversified local economy. • Preserve and enhance industrial sites with rail access. • As necessitated by market conditions, prepare District Plans that consider the renewal and rezoning of industrial land in a manner compatible with surrounding land uses.
I-494 Corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote additional high density development along the I-494 Corridor, especially within three primary growth nodes (Airport South, Penn American and Normandale Lake). • Guide development to locations where sanitary sewer capacity is available or can be provided in a cost effective manner. • Continue to advocate for improved transit within the corridor and for funds to study the potential long-term implementation of a transitway within the corridor. • Encourage high density residential uses within the corridor near services, amenities, employment, and transit. • Ensure that site plans are transit compatible. • Improve biking and walking opportunities. • Support improvements to I-494.

Source: Bloomington Planning Division.

Land Use – Transportation Coordination

Given that Bloomington's success is closely tied to its proximity to key transportation facilities, the successful integration of land use and transportation planning will be a vital component in achieving Bloomington's community vision. This vision will require higher density mixed use development well connected with alternative transportation modes. To coordinate land use and transportation planning in a sustainable manner, Bloomington will:

- Channel most new development to locations near transit, services, amenities and employment in order to reduce vehicle miles traveled.
- Use official controls to promote mixed use developments (horizontally or vertically mixed) to reduce vehicle miles traveled.
- Direct regionally oriented uses to locations near freeways to reduce non-local traffic on internal City streets.
- Advocate for new transit investments on alignments and with stations/stop locations that will maximize land use benefits.
- Advocate for State/Federal road improvements and pursue local road improvements to accommodate anticipated redevelopment levels.
- Improve the ease of travel by non-motorized means.
- Ensure that businesses providing goods and services are appropriately distributed within the city to reduce vehicle miles traveled.



Promoting Mixed Uses

Bloomington has done several things to promote mixed use development that supports the City's vision. Since 2000, Bloomington's commercial land use guide plan designations have all been amended to allow residential uses when mixed with permitted commercial uses. In 2005, Bloomington rezoned land near the Hiawatha LRT line to the new HX-R Zoning District, which requires residential use as part of any development. In 2006, Bloomington adopted new neighborhood and freeway commercial zoning districts that encourage incorporating residential uses. Recently, the City of Bloomington and the Bloomington HRA have taken a financial stake in the development of multiple mixed use projects, most notably Bloomington Central Station and Lyndale Green. Currently the City is pursuing district planning efforts that examine, among other things, how best to integrate residential uses within Bloomington's three largest commercial development nodes.



Bloomington Drug and Burger Bros. Sporting Goods were two commercial businesses in a strip mall on Lyndale Avenue near 98th Street, circa 1980s.

Current Land Use

Today, less than two percent of Bloomington's 24,540 acres (38.3 square miles) is vacant. The vast majority of Bloomington's future growth and renewal will therefore occur as redevelopment. Current distribution of land uses is summarized in **Table 2.2, page 2.5**, and depicted on **Figure 2.1, page 2.7**. Future land use is forecast in **Table 2.3, page 2.6**.

2.2 Land Use Summary

Land Use History

Before World War II, Bloomington was predominantly rural and agricultural. Fueled by an economic expansion in the post-war years, population soared from 9,902 in 1950 to 50,498 in 1960 and the city began its transformation to a major employment center. Large scale single-family residential development began in northeast Bloomington and spread toward the south and west. In 1960, U.S. Census Bureau records show a total of 12,281 single unit dwellings and only 77 multiple unit dwellings. After 1960, residential development diversified to include apartments, condominiums, and townhomes. Today, single-family detached dwelling units comprise 57 percent of total units. Vacant residential land has been successfully developed and construction of new dwelling units has shifted to redevelopment.

Commercial development first occurred in Bloomington along major transportation corridors, notably Lyndale Avenue (previously U.S. 65) and I-494 (previously Highway 5), and at crossroads such as France Avenue and Old Shakopee Road. Heavier industry concentrated in central Bloomington where railway access was available. Industrial land uses were later promoted in the Western Industrial Area, which is now fully developed.

One striking feature of Bloomington is that almost one-third of the City is set aside for public and quasi-public land uses. The bulk of that land is preserved in its natural state as conservation areas, including the Minnesota River Valley, Hyland Park Reserve, and large wetlands along Nine Mile Creek. Churches and other quasi-public uses are scattered throughout the City. Schools are also dispersed throughout the City, with the exception of the lack of public schools west of Normandale Boulevard. As this portion of Bloomington was developed, the school district was experiencing a rapid decline in enrollment which halted the construction of new schools and resulted in closing one-third of the existing schools.

Table 2.2 Land Use Distribution, 2008

Land Use Category	Acres	Percent
Residential		
Single-Family Detached	7,543	30.7%
Two Family	70	0.3%
Townhouses	223	0.9%
Condominiums	306	1.2%
Apartments	577	2.4%
Other	121	0.5%
Subtotal	8,841	36.0%
Public/Quasi Public		
Schools	406	1.7%
Churches	289	1.2%
Government Facilities	84	0.3%
Parks	3,047	12.4%
Golf Courses	283	1.2%
Conservation Areas	3,595	14.7%
Other	75	0.3%
Subtotal	7,779	31.7%
Street Right-of-Way		
Subtotal	5,472	18.9%
Commercial		
Retail	382	1.6%
Vehicle Oriented	169	0.7%
Restaurants	61	0.3%
Hotels	180	0.7%
Service Oriented	51	0.2%
Office	465	1.9%
Subtotal	1,308	5.3%
Industrial		
Manufacturing	221	0.9%
Warehousing	457	1.9%
Other	242	1.0%
Subtotal	920	3.7%
Vacant/Agricultural		
Vacant	158	0.6%
Agricultural	63	0.3%
Subtotal	221	0.9%
Grand Total	24,540	100.0%

Source: Bloomington Assessing Division.



Table 2.3 Existing and Planned Land Use, 2008

Within Urban Service Area	Allowed Density Range		Existing (2008)	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	Change 2000-2030
	Min	Max	In Acres						
Residential	Housing Units/Acre								
Low Density Residential	NA	5	7,613	7,613	7,598	7,580	7,565	7,545	-68
Medium Density Residential	5	10	344	344	354	364	374	384	+40
High Density Residential	10	NA	882	887	897	907	917	927	+45
Mixed Use Primarily Residential	NA	NA	1	1	3	5	7	9	+8
Commercial/Industrial	Estimated Employees/Acre								
Commercial	33		843	848	841	839	837	830	-13
Industrial	30		920	915	910	905	895	885	-35
Office	82		465	475	485	495	505	515	+50
Public/Semi-Public									
Institutional			1,137	1,137	1,137	1,137	1,137	1,137	None
Parks and Recreation			3,047	3,047	3,047	3,050	3,050	3,055	+8
Open Space			3,595	3,595	3,595	3,595	3,595	3,595	None
Roadway Rights-of-Way			5,472	5,472	5,482	5,492	5,502	5,512	+40
Undeveloped									
Vacant/Agricultural			221	206	191	176	161	146	-75
Other									
Wetlands			3,208	3,208	3,208	3,208	3,208	3,208	None
Open Water, Rivers and Streams			1,304	1,304	1,304	1,304	1,304	1,304	None
Total			24,540	24,540	24,540	24,540	24,540	24,540	None

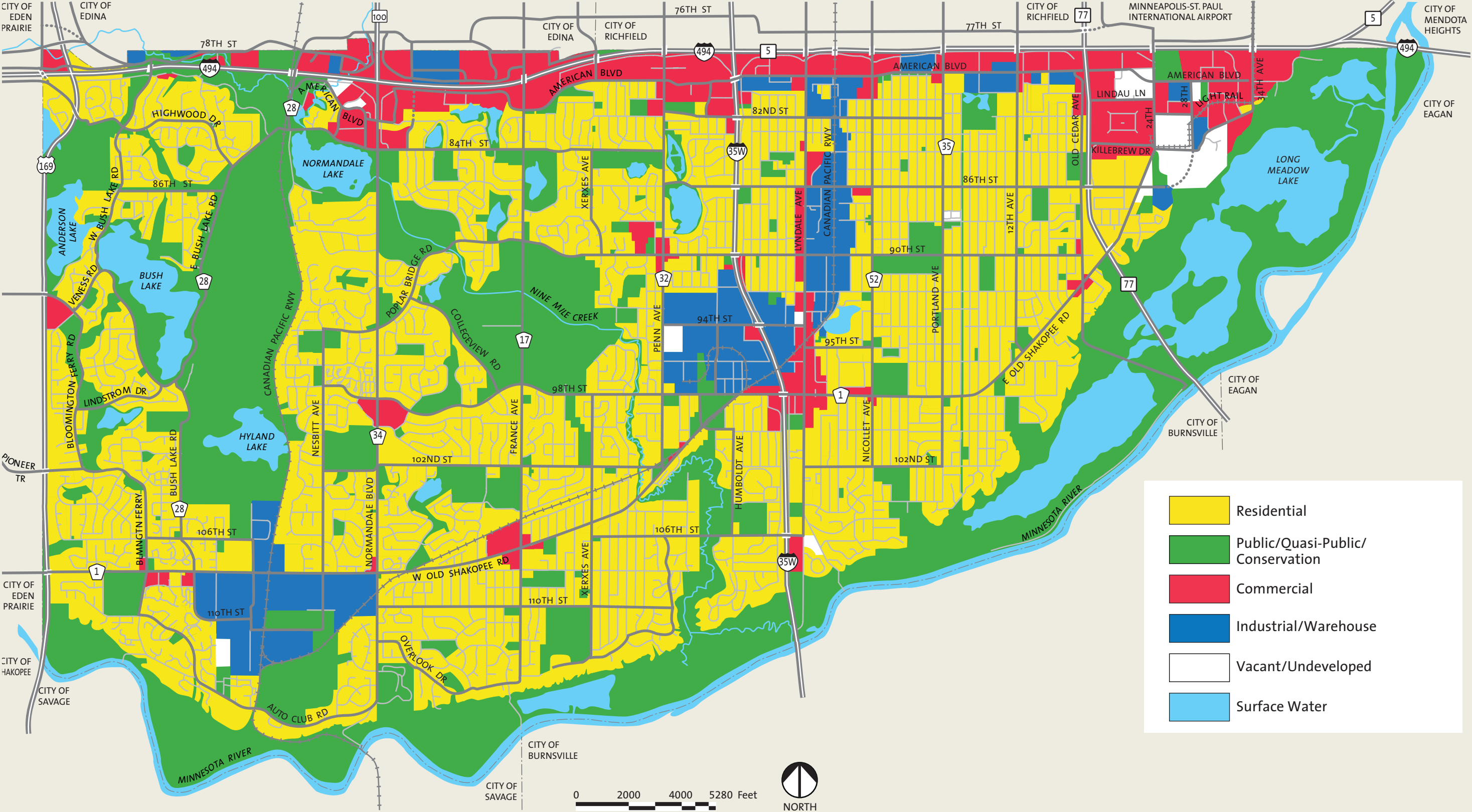
Note: The “Wetlands” and “Open Water, Rivers and Streams” categories are provided for reference purposes but are not included in the sum given. They are also counted within the various other categories, especially “Open Space.”

Information for Metropolitan Council: Of the land guided Medium Density Residential in 2008 (see **Table 2.6, page 2.18**), 20 acres are vacant and developable. Of the land guided High Density Residential in 2008 (see **Table 2.6, page 2.18**), 41.4 acres are currently vacant and developable. Although the High Density Residential designation does not include a maximum density, maximum densities are controlled by the underlying zoning district and typically would not exceed 60 units per acre. Maximum densities in the mixed use and commercial designations (listed in **Table 2.6, page 2.18**) are also controlled by the affiliated Zoning Districts. The Reflections project developed at Bloomington Central Station under the Airport South Mixed Use Designation is approximately 90 units per acre.

Source: Bloomington Planning Division, 2008.



Figure 2.1 Existing Land Use, 2008



2.3 Forecasts

Households

Looking ahead to 2030, the number of households (occupied housing units) in Bloomington will expand as economic factors provide additional incentives to live near work. Given its status as a large employment center, this trend is likely to increase housing demand in Bloomington. Bloomington forecasts average annual growth of 164 residential units per year through 2030 (see **Figure 2.2, below**).

Given Bloomington's stage of development and the economics of redevelopment, limited infill single-family housing is anticipated. Multi-story, multi-family housing will dominate future growth. Infill townhome style development is also anticipated. Bloomington's land use controls will guide most of the new residential growth to locations near transit, services, amenities and employment.

Population

In a fully developed city like Bloomington, population change is a function of household growth and the number of people per household. Since 1970, Bloomington has added 14,780 households but very little population, given that average household size has decreased considerably, from 4.2 people per household in 1960 to 2.3 in 2000. Looking forward, Bloomington's past trend of decreasing people per household may be bottoming out as immigration and turnover increasingly brings large families to Bloomington. Stabilizing average household size combined with housing unit growth will result in increasing population levels in the future (see **Figure 2.2, below**).



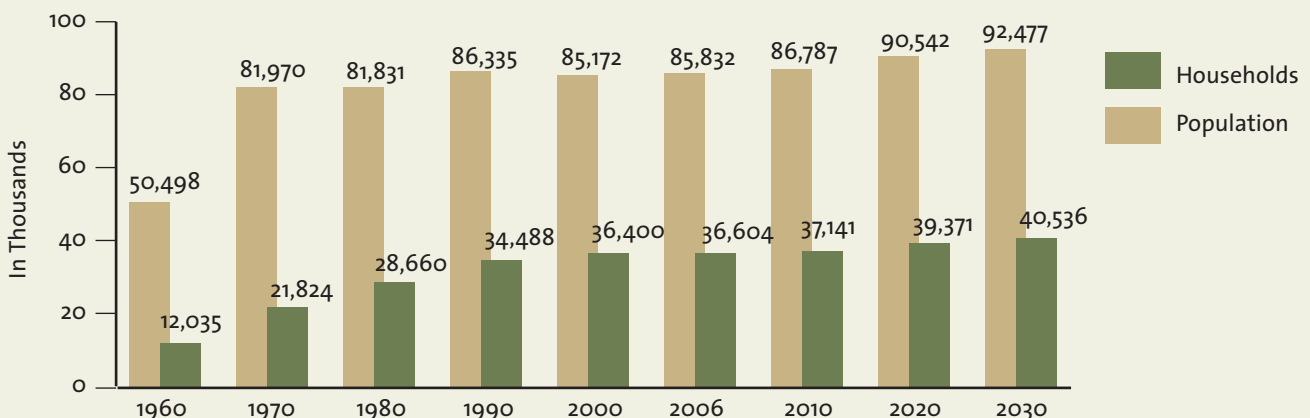
Employment

With almost two jobs for every resident in the work force, Bloomington's excellent regional location has made it a major employment center. This trend will continue as employers are attracted to locations near the international airport, major freeways, LRT, amenities and quality housing. Through 2030, Bloomington forecasts average annual growth of 1,700+ jobs per year (see **Table 2.4, below**).

Table 2.4
Employment Forecasts

Year	Employment
2000	106,322
2006	94,245
2010	108,118
2020	124,700
2030	135,214

Figure 2.2 Population and Households: Historic Data and Forecasts



Source: U.S. Census Bureau and Bloomington Planning Division, 2008.



Environmental Protection

As part of its long term commitment to sustainability, Bloomington strongly supports environmental protection. Large areas of the city have been set aside as conservation and natural areas, including the entire length of Bloomington's Minnesota River Valley, significant wetland and woodland areas along Nine Mile Creek and the large Hyland-Bush-Anderson Regional Park Reserve. As development occurred, the City also took steps to:

- Preserve and enhance numerous natural corridors linking larger natural areas to facilitate wildlife movement;
- Provide for watershed protection; and
- Maintain and enhance biological diversity and recreational open space.

Information about natural systems in Bloomington is available in the Environmental Protection Element of the 1980 *Comprehensive Plan*.

2.4 Associated Land Use Plans

This comprehensive plan is supplemented by a series of district plans that make detailed recommendations for various critical areas within the City. Evaluation of development proposals must consider the district plans as well as the *Comprehensive Plan*. In the event of a conflict between the *Comprehensive Plan* and a district plan, the *Comprehensive Plan* shall supercede.

Normandale Lake District Plan

Adopted in 2008, the *Normandale Lake District Plan* focuses on the area near 84th Street and Normandale Boulevard. Key recommendations of the District Plan include:

- Constructing transportation and transit improvements to allow full development of parcels in the District;
- Establishing a balance of residential, office, hotel and retail uses;
- Renewing the neighborhood retail center;
- Improving resident and employee access to parks in northwest Bloomington;
- Establishing development principles that protect the environment and surrounding open space;
- Improving the District's appearance with consistent streetscape, landscape and signs;
- Designing a sign and wayfinding system that helps people find their destination and adds to the District's identity; and
- Implementing a viable mechanism to pay for the initial phases of recommended public improvements.

Bluff Report District Plan

Adopted in 1982, the *Bluff Report District Plan* establishes urban design guidelines for development along the Minnesota River bluff to preserve its environment and character.

Future District Plans

In the future, the *Comprehensive Plan* is anticipated to be amended to add reference to additional District Plans prepared to coordinate land use, transportation and renewal efforts. Two district plans currently being prepared include the *Penn/American District Plan* and the *Airport South District Plan*.

2.5 Resources

Historic Resources

Cultural and historical resources shape development and give a community tradition and distinctiveness. As Bloomington developed from a prairie, marsh, and forest to a farming-oriented community and now to a city of 85,000 people, remnants of prehistoric and historic settlements and structures have become increasingly important and rare resources. The purpose of this section is to identify significant cultural and historical resources and recommend appropriate measures for their preservation.

The City of Bloomington has a rich inheritance as a result of the cultural backgrounds of the first settlers. Research and evaluation of Bloomington's prehistoric and historic periods establish a well documented record of influence of human activity on the development of the city.

Numerous people, events, and activities have influenced Bloomington history and provide for local and regional significance: Fort Snelling; Peter Quinn; the Pond family; Joseph Dean; the Bloomington Ferry; Colonel Savage; and the Dan Patch Line are only a few of the historical forces that shaped the growth and development of Bloomington. An extensive history of the city is provided in both *Bloomington on the Minnesota* (Judith A. Hendricks, 1976) and *Bloomington – A Sesquicentennial Celebration* (John C. Chalberg, 2007).

Every building does not become architecturally or historically significant simply because it is old. Every home or barn that dates back to the 1800s should not be preserved simply because of nostalgia. An important step in historic preservation is a comprehensive evaluation of historic sites. Given Bloomington's growth and development, it is important that sites be evaluated not in isolation, but as part of an urban setting, giving full consideration to factors that influence the context of historic sites.

The report *Bloomington: A Community Survey of Historic Sites* (1977) provides a preliminary survey and an initial compilation of architectural and historical information on a number of sites. The report classified sites into categories for preservation activities; however, a further examination of sites in relationship to Bloomington's historic preservation situation was warranted. An evaluation methodology was developed that allowed the City of Bloomington to assess and measure the relative architectural, historical, and community development value or significance of existing sites. The methodology made distinctions between sites, accounting for the important distinction between "historic sites" and "sites of general interest."

The City utilized this evaluation method to individually assess each site listed in the community survey. The results of the evaluation were used to prepare a



Restored in 2007, Old Town Hall is one of the few remaining examples of 19th Century Bloomington buildings and one of the last old town halls in the metropolitan area.

Pre-European Historic Resources

The prehistoric period in Bloomington extends from the retreat of the Wisconsin glaciers from southern Minnesota approximately 10,000 years ago to the explorations of Groseillers and Radisson on the lower Minnesota River in 1660. Bloomington was in a transition zone between the Paleo-Indian, Eastern Archaic, Woodland, and Late Mississippian prehistoric cultures because it was almost too far north for corn cultivation and almost too far south to rely on wild rice as a major food source.

Numerous burial mounds and earthworks in the Minnesota River Valley and on the adjacent bluffs are primary evidence of prehistoric peoples and cultures. The report, *Bloomington: A Community Survey of Historic Sites* (Miller-Dunwiddie Architects, Inc., 1977), identifies five existing mound groups and lists eleven destroyed or unlocated mound groups within Bloomington that are protected by State Law and City Ordinance.

Intent

The intent of Bloomington's historic preservation efforts is to integrate the preservation of prehistoric and historic resources into residents' daily lives. Bloomington's historic preservation plan provides techniques and standards for the evaluation, design, and implementation of a feasible and practical historical preservation program which emphasizes both public and private alternatives.

Bloomington Historical Register that was adopted by the City Council in 1979. The *Register* consisted of four categories of historic sites and the existing prehistoric sites. Class I sites were those properties that scored or rated the highest, followed by Class II, III, and IV.

In 1997, the *Register* was revised to combine the Class III and Class IV sites

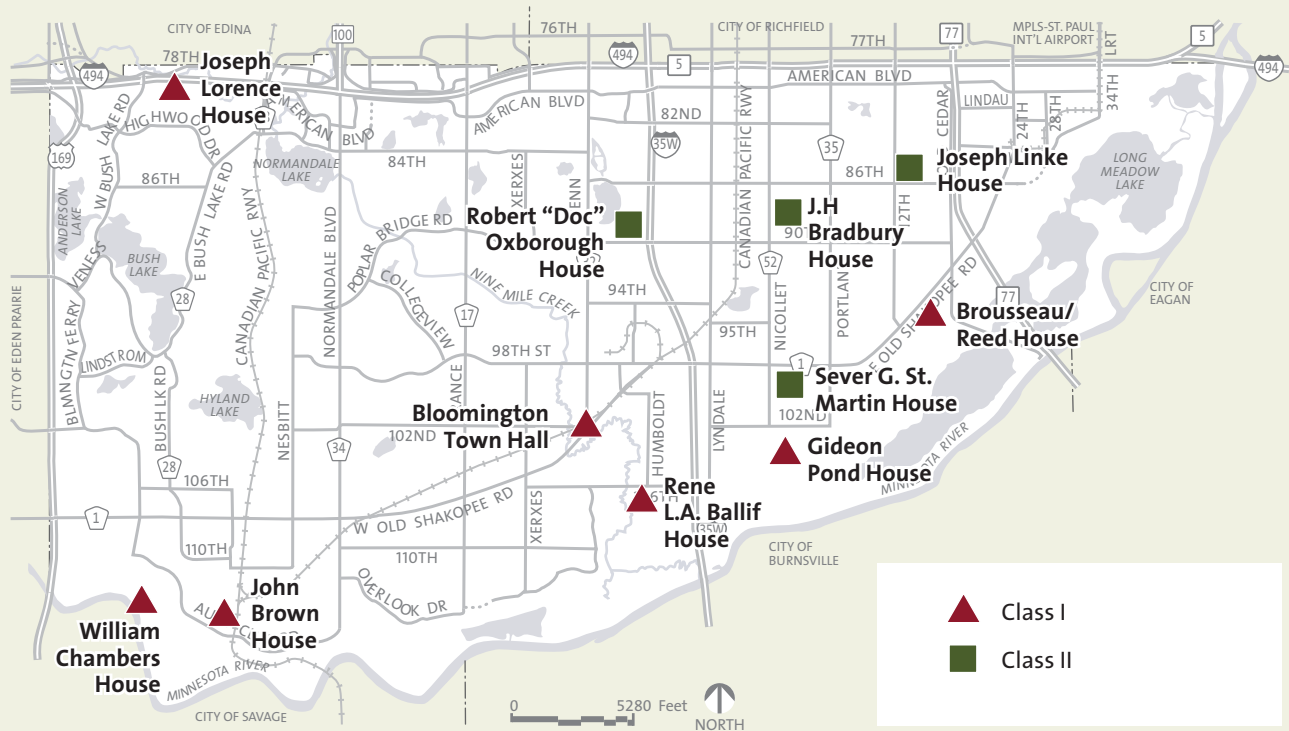
into a single category as "sites of general interest." The *Bloomington Historical Register* is used as the basis for historic site regulations and control. A register of prehistoric and historic sites is included in **Table 2.5, below**, and the Class I and II site locations are mapped in **Figure 2.3, page 2.13**.

Table 2.5 Register of Prehistoric and Historic Sites

Type	Site	Address
Existing	Findlay Mounds	Sec. 14, T.27, R.24
Prehistoric	Mounds	W 1/2 of SE 1/4, Sec. 5, T.115, R.21
	Cunningham Group	W 1/2 of SW 1/4 Sec 5, T.115, R.21
	Mound	SE 1/4 of NE 1/4, Sec. 6, T.115, R.21
	Bloomington Ferry Mounds	SW 1/4, Sec. 31, T.116, R.21
Class I	Gideon Pond House	401 East 104th Street
	William Chambers House	7648 Auto Club Road
	Brousseau/Reed House	1629 E. Old Shakopee Road
	Rene L. A. Ballif House	10624 Humboldt Avenue
	Joseph Lorence House	7335 Marth Road
	John Brown House	6630 Auto Club Road
	Bloomington Town Hall	10200 Penn Avenue
Class II	Robert "Doc" Oxborough House	1724 West 90th Street
	Joseph Linke House	1516 East 86th Street
	J.H. Bradbury House	8701 3rd Avenue
	Sever G. St. Martin House	125 E. Old Shakopee Road
General Interest	Jeremiah Scott House	9347 Cedar Avenue
	John T. Palmer House	801 East 86th Street
	Mary Christian House	8428 Portland Avenue
	William Davis House	10225 Lyndale Avenue
	2nd Thomas Oxborough House	9440 Penn Avenue
	Elmer Scott Ford Agency	9133 Cedar Avenue
	Florentine Standish House	1311 West 98th Street
	James Palmer House	4304 W. Old Shakopee Road
	Robert Kelly House	6211 Auto Club Road

Source: Heritage Preservation Commission, City of Bloomington, Minnesota, 1997.

Figure 2.3 Historic Sites



Source: Bloomington Planning Division.

Solar Resources

Given Bloomington's emphasis on creating an even more sustainable community, the uncertainty in future fossil fuel supplies and concerns about the negative environmental impacts of using fossil fuels, alternative energy sources will become increasingly important in the future. Government plays a role in preserving access to solar power. The ability to use solar power on one site can be impeded or obstructed by obstacles on an adjacent site.

To promote the use of solar energy, Bloomington will:

- Consider shadow cast studies and actively enforce existing setback and height limits that help preserve solar access.
- Encourage the use of solar power when feasible.

- Consider solar access for adjacent properties when reviewing development proposals.
- Base analysis of solar access on measures of need (heating/cooling degree days) or measures of availability (Langleys) rather than solstice conditions that occur only once per year.
- Balance desires for solar access with sometimes competing City desires for increased density in areas near transit, services, amenities and employment.

Aggregate Resources

Although aggregate resources are present in Bloomington and have been mined in the past, Bloomington's status as a fully developed community will restrict additional aggregate mining in the community.

Geothermal Resources

To promote sustainability and reduce reliance on fossil fuels, Bloomington strongly advocates the use of geothermal heating and cooling systems within the city.

Wind Resources

Relative to other parts of Minnesota, Bloomington's wind resources are minimal and are hampered by frequent obstructions such as buildings and trees that slow the wind. Rather than placing small wind generators in an area where wind resources are poor and may cause negative impacts due to the close proximity to residential uses, Bloomington advocates the construction of large wind farms in Minnesota and U. S. locations where wind resources make wind turbines the most cost-effective.



Land Use Guide Plan

To guide land use and development, the *Comprehensive Plan* includes a *Land Use Guide Plan* (attached as a fold out colored map) that depicts designated future land uses for all parcels within the city. The land use designations in the *Land Use Guide Plan* work hand-in-hand with zoning districts to implement the City's land use vision. While zoning districts operate on the micro level with detailed development limitations and performance standards, the future land use designations operate on the macro level and deal with broader land use issues. Zoning districts may allow specific uses that are not allowed under the future land use designations, and vice versa. For a development proposal to be approved, however, the proposed land use must comply with both the applicable zoning district and future land use designation.

2.6 Future Land Use

This section explains the range of land uses that are allowed in each land use designation. Occasionally, landowners submit applications to amend the land use designation that applies to their property. In evaluating requests for such amendments, the City will carefully consider 1) whether there has been a change in the factors upon which the existing designation was originally adopted that would justify the amendment (for example, the opening of a new freeway ramp or transitway or the change in air traffic noise) and, if not, 2) whether the proposed use constitutes an unanticipated development opportunity that would better serve the city and the surrounding neighborhood than the uses envisioned by the existing designation.

Low Density Residential

This designation allows residential development between zero and five dwelling units per acre. Typical development includes detached single family homes, although cluster housing below five units per acre and individual two family units meeting the minimum lot size requirements of the Zoning Ordinance are also allowed. Access requirements in this designation are low compared to other uses and this designation should generally be avoided in areas with excellent access to transportation facilities. In areas with steep slopes or other natural features worthy of protection, clustered housing design or large lots are appropriate to protect natural resources.

Medium Density Residential

This designation allows residential development between five and 10 dwelling units per acre. Typical development includes townhomes, patio homes, two family dwellings, condominiums, and low rise apartments. Access requirements in this designation are moderate, therefore locations with access to nearby arterial and collector streets are most appropriate.

High Density Residential

This designation allows residential development greater than 10 dwelling units per acre. Typical development includes multiple story apartments and condominiums. Given that access requirements for high density residential uses are high, this designation should be located only in areas adjacent to arterial and collector streets, and some level of transit service should generally be available.

Public

This designation applies to areas set aside for public uses. Typical uses include parks, schools, fire stations, municipal buildings, libraries, and open space. Access requirements of public uses vary widely and must be evaluated according to the nature of the particular use.

Quasi-Public

This designation, when combined with the proper zoning, provides areas throughout the community for privately owned uses that resemble public uses such as churches, private schools, private country clubs, nursing homes, funeral homes, day care, and private cemeteries. Certain open spaces used for utility transmission lines are also included. Access requirements of quasi-public uses vary widely and must be evaluated according to the nature of the particular use. Larger traffic generators should be located adjacent to arterial or collector streets.

Conservation

This designation applies to areas preserved in their natural condition for the protection of habitat, wildlife, and surface water drainage. Typical uses include natural areas, park reserves, wildlife conservation areas, storm water storage and associated facilities. Access to conservation areas should be controlled and roadways which border or cross conservation areas require special design consideration.

Water

This designation applies to medium and large bodies of water. Typical water bodies receiving this designation include rivers and open water lakes as classified by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

Right-of-Way

This designation applies to existing public rights-of-way and large areas that are reserved for future right-of-way needs. The designation is not meant to delineate every future right-of-way need and does not substitute for the master right-of-way plan. As portions of parcels are dedicated or otherwise acquired for right-of-way purposes, their designation is automatically changed to the Right-of-Way designation without formal plan amendment.

Office

This designation allows professional and business offices and related accessory retail and restaurant uses serving the needs of office building tenants. Access requirements for office uses are high, so land should only be designated Office when adjacent to arterial and collector streets. Non-accessory commercial uses are not allowed within this designation based on the desire to establish areas free from the intrusion of more intensive commercial enterprises. Residential uses are allowed within this designation when fully integrated with an office land use and allowed in the underlying zoning district. Due to compatible land use characteristics, hotels are allowed on sites guided Office, provided the site is appropriately zoned for a hotel and within one mile of a freeway interchange.



Typical Low Density Residential Use



Typical Medium Density Residential Use



Typical High Density Residential Use



Typical Office Use



Typical General Business Use



Typical General Business Use



Typical Community Commercial Use



Typical Community Commercial Use

General Business

This designation allows a wide range of commercial uses that are suitable for the relatively small, shallow parcels of the City's neighborhood commercial nodes. Allowed development includes retail and service uses such as neighborhood supermarkets (20,000 sq. ft. and below), small shopping centers (up to 100,000 sq. ft. total with individual tenants of 20,000 sq. ft. or less), drug stores, restaurants (10,000 sq. ft. or less), and gas stations. Office uses are allowed within this designation when integrated with a commercial use or as a stand alone use. Residential uses are allowed within this designation only when fully integrated with a general business land use and allowed in the underlying zoning district. Access requirements for this designation are moderate to high, so land should only be designated General Business when in close proximity to arterial or collector streets. This designation excludes larger scale retail and service uses that require larger parcel sizes or freeway visibility, such as hotels and motels, "big box" retail, medium and large sized shopping centers, hospitals, and automobile sales.

Community Commercial

This designation allows all General Business activities plus additional, larger scale service and retail uses that require larger parcels such as supermarkets and restaurants of any size, medium sized shopping centers (up to 250,000 sq. ft. total with individual tenants of 80,000 sq. ft. or less), and theaters. Hotels and motels are allowed within the Community Commercial designation only when the site is within one mile of a freeway interchange. Office uses are allowed within this designation when integrated with a commercial use or as a stand alone use. Residential uses are allowed within this designation only when fully integrated with a commercial land use and allowed in the underlying zoning district. Access requirements for this designation are high, so land should only be designated Community Commercial when adjacent to arterial or collector streets. This designation excludes regionally oriented retail and service uses that demand easy access from the freeway system such as large shopping centers, "big box" retail, hospitals, or automobile sales.

Regional Commercial

This designation allows all “General Business” and “Community Commercial” activities plus additional service and retail uses that require easy access from the freeway system such as hotels and motels, “big box” retail, large shopping centers, hospitals, and automobile sales. Office uses are allowed within this designation when integrated with a commercial use or as a stand alone use. Residential uses are allowed within this designation only when fully integrated with a commercial land use and allowed in the underlying zoning district. Access requirements of regional commercial uses are very high, so land should only be designated Regional Commercial when it is in close proximity to freeways and adjacent to arterial or collector streets.

Industrial

This designation allows industrial uses including manufacturing and warehousing. Industrial uses are heavy generators of employment and truck traffic and should have locations that are served by arterial and collector streets and close to freeways. Office uses play an important support role in industrial

areas and are allowed within this designation when integrated with an industrial use or as a stand alone use. Unrelated commercial and residential uses including auto sales are not allowed in industrial areas so that they do not interfere with industrial activities.

High Intensity Mixed Use

This designation works together with the HX-2 and CX-2 Mixed Use Zoning Districts to allow only master-planned, high intensity uses that are physically integrated with one another, that will attract visitors from within and beyond the region, and will achieve a magnitude of economic activity sufficient to generate significant additional development on surrounding properties.

Airport South Mixed Use

This designation works together with the HX-R Zoning District to foster a mixture of intense, employment oriented, tourist oriented, residential and support uses in areas with excellent transit service. The mixed use vision for this area is implemented through HX-R standards that require residential uses to be included, set minimum development intensities and restrict surface parking.



Typical Regional Commercial Use



Typical Regional Commercial Use



Typical Industrial Use

Typical High Intensity Mixed Use





Typical Airport South Mixed Use

Commercial Zoning Districts

To help implement the community's vision, Bloomington has recently adopted twenty-first century commercial zoning districts. New features within the districts include:

- Minimum intensity requirements.
- Minimum building heights.
- Maximum building setbacks.
- High density residential uses allowed when vertically or horizontally integrated with commercial uses.
- Design standards including window requirements, streetside entrance requirements, and anti-blank facade requirements.

Rezoning of land to these new districts is currently underway.

Table 2.6
Guide Plan Designations, 2008 Comprehensive Plan Update

Designation (Estimated Employees/Acre)	Acres	Percent	Estimated Residential	Residential Density Range in Units/Acre		
				Percent	Acres	Min Max
Low Density Residential	7,231	29.2	100	7,231	0	5
Medium Density Residential	710	2.9	100	710	5	10
High Density Residential	856	3.4	100	848	10	No limit
Public	1,739	7.0	0	0	NA	NA
Quasi-Public	611	2.5	0	0	NA	NA
Conservation	4,746	19.2	0	0	NA	NA
Water	2,000	8.1	0	0	NA	NA
Office (82)	675	2.8	0	0	0	60
General Business (33)	167	0.7	0	0	0	83
Community Commercial (33)	281	1.1	0	0	0	83
Regional Commercial (33)	201	0.8	0	0	0	83
High Intensity Mixed Use (100)	123	0.5	0	0	0	60
Airport South Mixed Use (100)	88	0.4	3.4	3	30	131
Industrial (30)	1,101	4.4	0	0	NA	NA
Right-of-Way	4,219	17.0	0	0	NA	NA

Note: No guide plan designation changes are proposed from the previous *Comprehensive Plan* as part of the 2008 update.

Source: Bloomington Planning Division, 2008.

2.7 Goals, Strategies, Actions

Goal 1 Encourage an efficient, desirable arrangement and distribution of land uses.

Strategy 1.1

Encourage a balance of uses within Bloomington.

- Carefully evaluate proposals to amend land use design ations to ensure that an appropriate mixture of uses is maintained citywide and that uses are appropriately distributed.
- Ensure that a sufficiently diverse employment base remains within Bloomington as one component in maintaining a diversified local economy.

Strategy 1.2

Encourage growth to occur in appropriate locations.

- Promote additional high density development along the I-494 Corridor especially within three primary growth nodes (Airport South, Penn American and Normandale Lake).
- Use land use controls to channel most high and medium density residential and mixed use growth to locations near transit, services, amenities and employment.
- Use land use controls to channel most non-residential growth to defined nodes and corridors near freeways and transit.
- Use land use controls to preserve the character of low density neighborhoods.
- Preserve and enhance natural areas.
- Encourage additional residential uses within and adjacent to commercial areas.
- Preserve, where appropriate, industrial sites with rail access.
- Guide development to locations where necessary sanitary sewer capacity is available or can be cost effectively added.

Strategy 1.3

Craft the Zoning Ordinance to work hand in hand with the Comprehensive Plan to achieve the City's development vision.

- Continue to update and modernize Bloomington's Zoning Ordinance to align development standards with the City's vision of becoming ever more sustainable.

Strategy 1.4

Mitigate land use conflicts.

- When considering development proposals and requests to change zoning or guide plan designations, evaluate the surrounding land uses and their level of compatibility with the proposed land use. The location of inherently incompatible land uses adjacent to one another will be strongly discouraged, unless the incompatibility can be sufficiently mitigated.
- Ensure that mixed use developments are designed in a manner that maximizes the benefits of mixing uses while mitigating any less positive impacts.
- In instances where it is desirable, or unavoidable, to have less compatible land uses adjacent to one another, require the proposed land use to provide an appropriate transition or buffer.
- Where land use conflicts currently exist, encourage mitigation measures such as the retrofit of screening or the redevelopment of one of the incompatible land uses.
- Encourage the timely completion of air noise mitigation by the Metropolitan Airports Commission.
- Encourage land use integration with transportation facilities.
- Enforce existing noise standards, encourage timely completion of ongoing aircraft noise insulation efforts and develop new standards for aircraft noise insulation.

Goal 2 **Ensure that redevelopment improves local conditions.**

Strategy 2.1

Prepare District Plans as needed to coordinate sustainable renewal with needed, cost effective infrastructure improvements.

Strategy 2.2

Coordinate infrastructure capacity and redevelopment proposals.

- Renew the City's transportation and utility infrastructure on an ongoing basis to accommodate forecasted growth.
- Encourage additional density to occur in locations where infrastructure capacity is or will be in place to support growth.
- Where appropriate, require applicant funding of infrastructure improvements necessary to serve the proposed redevelopment.

- Consider infrastructure constraints during development reviews and avoid redevelopment that cannot be adequately served by existing infrastructure or planned infrastructure improvements.

Strategy 2.3

Promote redevelopment of outdated or incompatible land uses and vacant buildings.

- Prepare District Plans, prepare Redevelopment Plans and allocate strategic funding to guide future redevelopment.

Strategy 2.4

Require that renewal mitigate impacts on adjacent property that are in excess of current impacts.

- Consider negative impacts on adjacent property during development reviews.
- Require mitigation of impacts as necessary through conditions of approval.

Strategy 2.5

Oppose inappropriate conversions of existing structures.

- Deny proposals to convert an existing structure to a use for which it was not intended (for example, conversion of an industrial building to a retail use) unless the site can be renovated and reconfigured to fully meet Code requirements and the needs of the new land use.
- Pursue enforcement action against illegal use conversions.

Strategy 2.6

Ensure that renewal sites are suitably sized for the proposed replacement land use.

- Carefully consider the ability of the proposed site size to accommodate the proposed level of development without increasing impacts.

Strategy 2.7

Avoid redevelopment or land subdivision that leaves behind difficult to develop “orphan parcels.” “Orphan parcels” are parcels that are unlikely to be redeveloped unless they are combined with an adjoining parcel.

- Consider whether proposed development creates or leaves behind “orphan parcels” due to their small size, lack of access or inability to meet the performance standards of the underlying zoning district.
- Consider whether “orphan parcels” are created or left behind due to actions of the applicant or due to actions of others.

Goal 3 Promote continued economic development for the city and the region.

Strategy 3.1

Promote and facilitate State and Federal investments in freeway, roadway and transit infrastructure.

- Support the completion of planned Bloomington transitway improvements (I-35W BRT and Cedar Avenue BRT).
- Advocate for the study and creation of a transitway within the I-494 employment corridor to connect the Hiawatha and Southwest LRT lines.
- Advocate for and support freeway and roadway improvements necessary to accommodate future traffic and redevelopment, most notably the high priority reconstruction of interchanges at I-494/US-169 and at I-494/I-35W.
- Obtain dedication of rights-of-way and easements as necessary to accommodate future infrastructure improvements.

Strategy 3.2

Promote and facilitate regional investments in sanitary sewer infrastructure.

- Advocate for and support sanitary sewer improvements to the regional system that are necessary to support forecast future sewer flow levels.
- Obtain dedication of rights-of-way and easements as necessary to accommodate future infrastructure improvements to support added development.

Strategy 3.3

Maximize the benefits of the MSP International Airport to Bloomington.

- Pursue the implementation actions outlined in the Airport Impact Element and the District Plans.

Strategy 3.4

Encourage the creation of environmentally sustainable businesses and development.

Goal 4 Preserve environmental and historic resources.

Strategy 4.1

Protect and, where appropriate, enhance environmentally sensitive areas, such as floodplains, bluffs, steep slopes, and wetlands.

- Enforce Code standards and develop new standards as needed.
- Where possible, preserve wetlands for wildlife preserves, open space or stormwater management.

Strategy 4.2

Encourage the identification, preservation, and maintenance of sites with historic, architectural, archeological, environmental and cultural value or significance.

- Integrate historic, architectural, archeological, and cultural preservation in the routine activities of the City, such as zoning, code enforcement, public works, and economic development.
- Applications for permits in relation to a Class I or Class II historic or identified prehistoric site will be reviewed by City staff. If a Certificate of Appropriateness is required, staff will prepare a recommendation to the City Council.
- Require environmental reviews for development impacting the Minnesota River Bluff, the steep valley section of Nine Mile Creek, the bottomland woods along the Minnesota River and the prairie and oak savanna in the Regional Park Reserve.

Strategy 4.3

Preserve resources for future generations.

- Preserve examples of major natural plant communities.
- Preserve and protect wildlife habitat.
- Support efforts to conserve energy.
- Encourage the use of solar and geothermal energy in Bloomington.
- Promote sustainable building construction and design.
- Encourage changes to International and State building codes to encourage sustainability.

